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Recommended Citation

Georgia Southern University, "Newsroom" (2019). *Newsroom*. 1716.
<https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/newsroom/1716>

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Georgia Southern faculty has papers republished in influential paper list

JULY 16, 2019

An article by Charles Champ, Ph.D., professor of statistics, was republished in *Technometrics*, which is completing its 60th year of publication. To commemorate the occasion, *Technometrics* published a special 60th anniversary virtual issue that includes electronic reprints of 35 classic articles. The concepts explored in these articles are the foundation of statistical methods and tools used by practitioners in the physical, chemical, engineering and information sciences.

Champs article, "A multivariate exponentially weighted moving average control chart weighted moving average control chart," was originally published in 1992.

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Paying it forward: Georgia Southern professor provides STEM opportunities to disadvantaged youth in her home country

JULY 16, 2019



College of Education's Beverly King Miller, Ph.D. (seated, front row with children) returns to her hometown in Panama to provide STEM opportunities to local youth.

When Georgia Southern University College of Education (COE) faculty member Beverly King Miller, Ph.D., left Pueblo Nuevo, a community in Panama, to live in the United States at the age of six, her grandmother had only one wish for her — that she become the first woman in their family to attend college.

Miller exceeded her grandmother's expectations, earning a doctoral degree in education from the University of New Mexico. Her dissertation focused on the experiences of Panamanian, Afro-Caribbean women in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). It was, in fact, one of her own experiences there that left an indelible mark on her.

"You know this work is not just for you," one of her dissertation committee members told her.

Those words stuck with her, and she turned them into motivation to help others. In 2017, when her church asked if she would take on the role of missions coordinator, she gladly accepted.

After instituting STEM education opportunities in the United States and South Africa, Miller set out to find a location in her home country where she could host a STEM camp for disadvantaged youth.

"I went all over, only to end up right back in my old neighborhood where I grew up," she said.

In a small church with three classrooms, Miller and three volunteers hosted the first STEM camp, "Ventaja Panama," or "Advantage Panama," for 45 children ages eight to 18.



"I had never taught full content in Spanish," said Miller. "I had to make sure all the curriculum and materials were translated and altered to be culturally relevant to Panamanian students."

Miller designed the camp to have three main components — strong curriculum, a field experience and meals.

"Children cannot learn if they are hungry," Miller explained.

For many of the camp's participants, who were on a week-long break from the local school, the meals they received during the camp were some of the only meals they ate all week.

In the summer of 2017 and the following year, when Miller and volunteers returned to host another camp, field experiences, including visits to the Panama Canal and the Afro-Antillean Museum of Panama, allowed students to have hands-on learning that related to the week's instruction.

This summer, 85 students ages five and up participated in the program. COE student Aleshia Hill, a senior elementary education major, and 12 volunteer assistants, including two Georgia Southern alumni, joined Miller.

"The alumni and Aleshia were trained so well as teachers at Georgia Southern that I knew I could trust them to handle their own classrooms and instruction," Miller said. "They were also a huge help in drafting curriculum."

Miller was also able to pair Panamanian and American educators together to help provide knowledge and experience to the local volunteers and teachers on education best practices and classroom management techniques. In addition, the group's field experience included a trip to the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute, Punta Culebra Nature Center.



Students participate in hands-on activities at Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute's Punta Culebra Nature Center in Panama.

"I want this camp to be a true partnership," explained Miller. "We work together with the local college volunteers and teachers so that they can continue to work with students when we are not there."

Organizing an international camp is not easy to coordinate, noted Miller, but the effort is worthwhile.

"Teaching in Panama is amazing," she said. "These students are grateful for every lesson and instruction. This year, the students were literally hovering over math. I couldn't tear them away. They talked about their math lessons the entire week."

Miller is grateful for the opportunity to help her community.

"I am able to give back because someone gave to me," said Miller. "Someone from the United States came to Panama and offered my uncle an opportunity to study in the U.S. This one act systematically altered the trajectory of my entire family. I now bring education from the States to Panama. Imagine the possibilities!"

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